



Water Safety Ireland

2021
Annual Report



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

An initiative within the Department of Rural and Community Development.

**BETTER SAFE
THAN SORRY**



Annual Report 2021

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Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland
Patron of Water Safety Ireland

Chair's Statement

Ms. Clare McGrath



On the 8th of December, I was delighted and very proud to accept my appointment as Chair of Water Safety Ireland. When making this announcement, the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, paid particular tribute to our organisation's rich history of volunteerism and the deep commitment shown by volunteers who teach swimming and lifesaving and promote drowning prevention initiatives nationwide.

We can certainly be proud of the fact that we are consistently to the fore in raising awareness of the dangers of drowning and this is so well reflected in communities nationwide in which our members educate and train thousands of people in water safety best practices.

My objective is to continue our efforts to bring drownings down further by promoting the necessary rescue skills, attitudes and behaviours. I very much look forward to working with the WSI Council and engaging its Commissions, our thirty Water Safety Area Committees nationwide and the members, Local Authorities, and other Agencies to develop policies and projects that help encourage more participation and engagement at all levels.

Over the next five years as Chairperson I look forward to providing leadership to the Council in the continued delivery of Ireland's National Drowning Prevention Strategy 2018-2027, and the strategic development of the organisation. Overall drowning rates have continued to decrease over the decades and in addition to your efforts in this regard, I thank the outgoing Chair Martin O'Sullivan for his commitment to the many tasks at hand and the WSI staff for the support they give to drowning prevention.

The last two years have been especially demanding due to the challenges of COVID-19, which affected our teaching, training of Lifeguards, summer weeks, lifesaving sport and all our other activities. I would again like to thank our outgoing Chair leading the organisation in a very professional manner during these challenging times.

Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, we still managed to do quite a number of our activities, albeit at reduced capacity in some cases. The Sports Commission managed a national outdoor competition – our National Lifesaving Championships - at the beginning of October in Kilkee, Co. Clare. Our Water Safety Area Committees managed to run summer weeks following a new standard operating procedure and while numbers were curtailed, thankfully some venues were able to operate. We made changes to our Lifeguard training regime to ensure that beaches, pools and waterways had trained qualified Lifeguards on duty. Our winter courses also proceeded following Government guidelines and a specific standard operating procedure agreed by our Technical Committee. From this perspective I especially wish to highlight the excellent work of our Winter and Summer Course Organisers, especially during 2021 within Covid restrictions.

The number of lives saved and aquatic accidents avoided as a result of the work carried out by all of our active volunteers can never be fully enumerated, although one figure that brings home the importance of this work is the number of rescues performed by Lifeguards each year, a figure which reached 473 during 2021. These same Lifeguards, trained and assessed by Water Safety Ireland, administered first aid on over 6,000 occasions and reunited with their loved ones, more than 500 children found wandering alone by the water's edge.



I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to each of the Committees, Commissions and Working Groups, who have remained focused throughout the year.

While Covid-19 continues to present challenges, the Inshore Rescue Boats Commission provided safety cover for our surf championships and organised two I.R.B courses throughout the year. WSI's Lifeguard Commission modified the Lifesaving and Lifeguard Syllabi for use during the Covid-19 period, and tailored the Local Authority Beach Lifeguard Tests for nationwide use in both pool and open water settings.

Risk Assessments were a priority activity for the Rescue Commission in 2021, particularly on Blue Flag Beaches, as well as reviewing the VAT inspection process in line with recent SAR developments.

I would like to recognise the Education Committee and Strategic Marketing Committee for targeting at-risk groups with initiatives to highlight best practice so that drownings are reduced. These initiatives and public awareness campaigns endeavour to keep water safety in the public consciousness all year round. Through continued government funding and sponsorship, we were able to reinforce our 'Better Safe Than Sorry' brand message across audio, print and digital promotions. One such initiative this year is our "Hold Hands" programme for Early Learning Centres which empowers creches to start teaching water safety at a very early age.

An important and indeed historic day for the drowning prevention community in Ireland during 2021 was the approval by the United Nations of the first ever resolution on drowning prevention which will be marked annually on the 25th of July. We are grateful to the many Lifeguards, parents and children, heritage sites and the range of buildings and organisations that in some way went blue to mark the occasion.

I wish to thank each member of the Council for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that 2021 projects were successfully completed. I look forward with confidence to the continued growth of our organisation and a future free of Covid-19 related hinderances.

The staff of Water Safety Ireland's Head Office provide essential support all year round. Without them we could not deliver on our objectives. I would like to thank them for their continued hard work and especially in adapting to the new arrangements resulting from Covid-19.



Clare McGrath
Chair, Water Safety Ireland

Water Safety Ireland Council

Clare McGrath, Chair: December



Clare is a member of Water Safety, Clare, and is an active Water Safety Ireland Instructor, Examiner, Tutor, and International Referee and she has worked as a referee at the highest level at European and World competitions. She is the current Chair of the Sports Commission, having been a member of the sport commission for 12 years, and has been involved in the organisation of the Regional and National lifesaving competitions, both pool and beach, for 15 years. She works with Clare County Council, as the Water Safety Development Officer within the Environment Section.

Martin O'Sullivan, Chair: January - December



Martin has been involved with water safety since 1970 and has served as Chairman of the Cork Water Safety Area Committee at various times since 1973. Martin is the WSI representative on the Blue Flag jury and is an Examiner, Swimming Teacher Tutor, Senior Risk Assessment Tutor with ILS (Europe). He has been involved internationally since 1990, is a member of the Board of Directors of ILSE.

Seamus O'Neill, Vice Chairman



Seamus started lifesaving at the young age of 10 and became an Instructor in 1975. Seamus is an Examiner, Lifeguard Provider, International Beach Referee and Tutor. He is the current Chairman of the Technical Committee and has served on the WSI Sports, Education and Swimming Commissions. He is also currently Summer Weeks Co-ordinator of the Donegal Water Safety Area Committee.

Michael Cuddihy



Michael "Buddy" Cuddihy has been a member of the board since 1987. During this time, he has served on many national and international committees, including the Lifeguard Commission, the European College of Referees and the Sports Commission, where he brought teams to mainland Europe, Australia, South Africa and the USA. He is currently the Chairperson of the Inshore Rescue Boats (IRB) Commission. He is also an active Water Safety Ireland Swim Teacher, Examiner, Senior Tutor with the IRBs, Referee, and Risk Assessor.



Paul Murphy



Paul is from Dublin and has been involved with Water Safety Ireland as a volunteer for over 40 years. He is an active Water Safety Ireland Lifesaving Instructor, Swimming Teacher, Examiner, Pool & Beach Lifeguard Course Tutor, and Swim Teacher Tutor. He has previously served on a number of Technical Commissions over the last 20 years. He is also the current Chairman of the WSI Lifeguard Commission.

Tom Doyle



From Wexford, Tom has been involved with Water Safety since the early seventies having worked in Wexford Swimming Pool for over 30 years. He is currently the Chair of the Water Safety Ireland Audit Commission and has previously served as Chairman of the Wexford Water Safety Area Committee, Water Safety Development Officer for Wexford County Council, and served on the Lifeguard Commission. Tom is also on the board of Wexford Credit Union. His leisure interests include electrical design, scuba diving, and cycling.

Lola O'Sullivan



Lola is from Tramore, County Waterford and has been involved with Water Safety Ireland for 30 years. She is an active Instructor, Pool and Beach Lifeguard Course Provider, and Examiner in Waterford. Lola is very involved in Surf Lifesaving in Waterford and has competed in Surf Lifesaving both nationally and internationally. She is also Chair of the Waterford Water Safety Area Committee and is a Councillor with Waterford City and County Councils. She previously held the position of Sports Officer for Waterford and served as a crew member with the RNLI in Tramore.

Karen Morton



Karen lives in Dublin and is a Non-Executive Director, Strategic Marketing Consultant and Personal Branding expert. Karen's career spans a variety of multinationals (Dell, British Airways and Eir) and fast growth start-ups (Monster.com) in a wide range of sectors. Karen spent 10 years at Dell in Marketing leadership roles including Chief Marketing Officer of Dell Financial Services. Karen's areas of expertise include Governance, Leadership, International, Strategy, Marketing, Communications and Digital/Social. Karen led the Dell Women's Network for 3 years and sat on the Connecting Women in IT committee in Dublin. Karen is a graduate of the University of Limerick where she received an Honours Degree in Marketing and French. Karen has a keen interest in water safety and was a Lifeguard at University.

Peter Cleere



Peter Cleere is a native of Skeoughvosteen, Co. Kilkenny and has been a member of Kilkenny Water Safety since 2014. He is currently a county councillor for the Callan Thomastown Local Electoral Area for Kilkenny County Council. A former Mayor of Kilkenny, he is also currently Chairperson of the Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board (KCETB). Peter has 20 years experience in the financial services industry and is a Chartered Banker, fully Qualified Financial Adviser (QFA) and holds a Professional Diploma in Financial Services. His leisure interests include GAA, where he is currently a player and an underage coach with his local club.

Tom O'Mahony



Tom O'Mahony lives in Dunboyne, Co Meath. He is a retired civil servant and served as Secretary General of the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport. In a previous role in the Department of the Environment he was involved in the statutory establishment of Water Safety Ireland, then Irish Water Safety, in 1999. He is very active in the fields of sport (where he is President of St Patrick's Athletic FC and a member of the Board of the Federation of Irish Sport) and music (as a recording artist under the stage name Tommy Keyes).

Anastasia Ward



Anastasia, originally from Ballinasloe, County Galway, is a Barrister who qualified in 1994. She has worked as a consultant to the Office of the Attorney General and has lectured across a vast selection of subject areas in a wide variety of third-level institutions including the Law Society of Ireland and Griffith College Dublin. Since 2017, Anastasia has been Program Leader for both the MA in Dispute Resolution and Professional Law for Independent Colleges. She also runs a small pharmacy chain in partnership with her husband. Anastasia swam competitively for a number of years in the 1980s at a provincial level, and during this time, she also undertook lifesaving training. These experiences lead her to an appreciation of the importance of water safety generally, and of swimming as a life skill. Her leisure interests, apart from swimming, include cinema and classical music.

Philip Keleghan



Philip Keleghan is from County Wicklow and has been involved in Water Safety and other aquatic activities for over forty years. He is an active Water Safety Instructor, Examiner, and Swimming Tutor. He is currently the Chair of the Education Commission. He is also the Vice-Chair of Kildare Water Safety. He has a special interest in the development of strong local area committees and is currently working to develop an Inland Water Safety and Lifesaving Training Centre in Blessington.

Anne Ryan



A Wexford native, Anne has been an Instructor and Volunteer with Water Safety Ireland since 1995. Among her many credentials within the volunteering ethos of Water Safety Ireland, Anne is also the Local Area Secretary, a Swimming Teacher and Examiner. In addition to working on FETAC updates, Anne works on all matters assigned to the Education Commission of which she is Vice Chair and is the QQI representative. In addition to these activities, Anne finds the time to organise Cahore Outdoor Water Safety Week, with which she has played an active role since 1996.

Council Meetings 2021 Attendance Record

In addition to the Council meetings, members have also attended Commission meetings, conferences, exhibitions and other water safety events throughout the year on behalf of Council.

Martin O'Sullivan	5
Seamus O'Neill	7
Michael Cuddihy	6
Philip Keleghan	7
Anne Ryan	7
Peter Cleere	6
Paul Murphy	6
Tom Doyle	6
Lola O'Sullivan	3
Karen Morton	7
Anastasia Ward	3
Clare McGrath	7
Tom O'Mahony	7

Water Safety Area Committees

The organisation has thirty Water Safety Area Committees, arranged almost on a county basis plus the Defence Forces and the Gárda Síochána Water Safety Area Committees. Much recognition must be afforded to these Water Safety Area Committees who devise a programme of events and courses to cover their areas for the year. In addition to delivering water safety promotional programmes and demonstrations at schools, colleges, businesses, exhibitions and community events, each Committee delivers an extensive programme of pool water safety sessions in the winter and beach, lake and river water safety sessions in the summer.

The official membership structure is of a voluntary nature with over five thousand members nationwide. It operates on a number of different levels: Life Governors, Examiners, Trainee Examiners, Tutors, Instructors, Trainee Instructors and Non-Technical Volunteer Organisers. Each Local Authority has a Water Safety Development Officer who is a member of Water Safety Ireland.

Thanks to all their efforts to promote water safety we have seen a significant increase in the development of water safety awareness in local communities.



Water Safety Ireland - Staff

- Lt. Cdr. John F.M. Leech, CEO
- Roger Sweeney, Deputy CEO & Marketing Manager
- Joan Harte, Office Manager
- Jocelyn Cunningham, Clerical Administrator
- Alison Elstone, Clerical Administrator
- Emer Gardiner, Clerical Administrator
- Ciara Gleeson, Education Development Officer
- Bernard Cahill, Development Executive - Education and Sport
- Padraig Judge, Marketing Executive
- Jennifer O'Neil, Board Secretary, HR & Compliance Officer (started June 7th, 2021)

Water Safety Ireland employees participated in 103 hours of training activities in 2021.

National Office Water Safety Ireland The Long Walk Galway

Auditors

Comptroller & Auditor General 3A Mayor Street Upper
Dublin 1

Internal Auditors

RBK
Park View House
Beech Hill Office Campus
Clonskeagh
Dublin 4

Bankers

Bank of Ireland Mainguard Street Galway

Solicitors

Alastair Purdy & Co. Solicitors Corrib Castle
1 Waterside Woodquay Galway

Sheehan & Co. Solicitors
16 Merchants Road
Galway



Water Safety Ireland – Committees

The Technical Committee

Seamus O'Neill - Chairman
Michael Cuddihy
Paul Murphy
Ronnie Horan
Breda Collins
Clare McGrath

Duties:

- Co-ordinate and monitor the work of all Technical Commissions
- Review all Technical Commission recommendations and forward as appropriate all suitable recommendations to Council for approval
- Review all Technical procedures
- Review all Lifesaving syllabi & publications
- Manage the Annual WSI Examiner's Conference
- Identify and prioritise new projects

Audit & HR Commission:

Tom Doyle - Chairman
Anastasia Ward
Tom Keating
Paul Burke
Peter Cleere
Tom O'Mahony
Joan Harte
John Leech

Duties:

- Monitoring Expenditure and Income
- Internal Financial Controls & Risk Management
- Internal Audits
- HR Matters
- Define an approach for the continuation of management development for both existing and new staff
- Health & Safety
- National & International Travel
- Develop strategies to increase membership
- Recommend National & International Appointments
- Improve links with Local Authorities, meet more County Managers and County Councillors

Marketing Commission:

Karen Morton- Chair
Donnchadh O'Sullivan
Aidan Collins
Roger Sweeney
Padraig Judge

Duties:

- Promotion of the public awareness of water safety
- Manage national Marketing campaigns to promote water safety awareness
- Manage the WSI Digital and Social channels
- Communicate WSI Educational campaigns
- Produce marketing and promotional material as outlined within S.I. 56 of 2019 and Strategic Development Plan
- Ensure brand consistency across all merchandise such as certificates, books, manuals, leaflets, posters and online
- Manage the strategy for press releases and all external communications
- Conduct market research on water safety awareness and drowning prevention
- Ensure that WSI is well represented at exhibitions nationwide
- Liaise with external agencies
- Assist in organising national ceremonies, conferences & events
- Market the WSI Brand
- Monitor Press Cuttings
- Source sponsorship
- Promote the wearing of lifejackets and use of ringbuoys
- Develop the commercial strand to our organisation
- Analyse drowning statistics

Rescue Commission:

Ronnie Horan – Chairman
Valerie Stundon
Ger Keeling
Fergus O'Neill
Colin Williams

Duties:

- Promote Blue Flag safety standards and other aquatic environmental issues
- Manage Risk Assessments at local, national & international level
- Manage the VAT Inspections and run the training courses for Community Rescue Boats Ireland (CRBI)
- Manage the SEIKO JIT Rescue Award
- Assist in Rescue on Inland and maritime Waters
- Liaise with Community Rescue Boats Ireland
- Test rescue equipment
- Liaison with Irish Marine Search & Rescue Committee
- Develop and rollout a Safety Awareness Programme for those employed near aquatic environments.

The VAT inspection process was reviewed in line with recent SAR developments and liaison with units. The Rescue Commission approved 15 applications for Just In Time Awards, 1 Rescue Appreciation Award and 2 Posthumous Rescue Appreciation Awards for members of the public who saved a life in the aquatic environment. 50 Risk Assessments were carried out during 2021 on inland and coastal areas by Risk Assessors. A total of 14 Water Safety Awareness Courses were

NATIONAL WATER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

JUNE 14-20



NO SWIMMING LESSONS FOR A YEAR...

KNOW YOUR LIMITS.

GIVE WATER SAFETY **THE FOCUS** WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by putting water safety first for you and your family this summer.

Swim at lifeguarded waterways. Swim between the flags and stay within your depth.

Get the advice you need at **watersafety.ie**



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held for Government Departments, Local Authorities and other organisations during 2021. 184 were certified at the end of the courses.

Sports Commission:

Clare McGrath – Chairman
Simon McGarrigle
Gary Knox
James Hassey

Duties:

- Liaison to Swim Ireland, Federation of Irish Sport and Coaching Ireland
- Manage National and International Competitions
- Develop Life Saving Clubs nationwide
- Train & appoint Coaches, Referees and Officials
- Ensure all WADA regulations are enforced for our athletes
- Recommend Sports Equipment
- Manage International Life Saving Sport & Competitions
- Promote and develop lifesaving sport in Ireland
- Liaison with the Olympic Council of Ireland
- Draw up procedures for all sports activities and competitions

Lifeguard Commission:

Paul Murphy – Chairman
Sean O’Keefe
John Claffey
Eamon Owens

Duties:

- The promotion of efficiency and standardisation of the Lifeguard Service
- The improvement of national standards for Lifeguards
- All matters dealing with Lifeguards (Pool, Beach, River)
- Recommend national standard for all lifesaving equipment
- Train Lifeguards in rescue crafts
- Water Safety Development Officers Conference
- The provision of instruction in water safety, rescue, resuscitation and recovery skills
- European Qualification Framework in Lifeguarding

Education Commission:

Philip Keleghan – Chairman
Anne Ryan
Ashling Nesbitt
Anne-Marie Kiernan
Matthew Campbell
Bernard Cahill
Ciara Gleeson

Duties:

- Promotion of measures, including the advancement of education, related to the prevention of accidents in the aquatic environment
- Maintain and develop training and water safety awareness programmes within the Irish Educational System.
- Develop a Transition Year water safety programme
- Manage the Teachers Training Courses
- Development of further FETAC awards
- Manage all Children's interests
- Review and update all Children's and educational documents
- Arrange seminars for Designated Persons
- Liaise with the Dept of Education to maximise water safety awareness training and public awareness programmes.
- Manage, monitor and enforce best practices in accordance with Children First and our own Code of Ethics for children.

Swimming Commission:

Breda Collins – Chairman
John Farrell
Deirdre Webster
Clive Seawright

Duties:

- The provision of instruction in swimming in order to teach lifesaving
- Liaise with Swim Ireland in relation to swimming standards
- Train & examine Swimming Instructors and Tutors
- Manage the Annual Water Safety Area Committee Officers Conference
- Improve membership and communication with WSAC's
- Monitor standards of Governance of WSAC's
- Represent WSI at IFSTA
- Ensure WSI is represented on the White Flag Jury
- Monitor Swimming Pool Standards
- Develop a document and template for Risk Assessment in swimming pools
- Evaluate the number of Swim Certificates in WSI
- Develop better communications with ILAM

Inshore Rescue Boats Commission:

Michael Cuddihy - Chairman
Patrick O'Grady

NATIONAL WATER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

JUNE 14-20



GIVE WATER SAFETY **THE FOCUS** WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by always wearing a lifejacket when paddle boarding.

Check local tides, currents and weather forecast before going out.

Get the advice you need at **watersafety.ie**



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Kevin McCloskey
Paul Pearson

Duties:

- Maintain recognition and equivalency for IRB Driver and Crew Qualifications
- Promote the use of powered rescue craft for beach lifeguard patrol and rescue requirements
- Development of national training manuals and training records
- Provision of national and regional training courses for IRB instructors
- Provision of instruction in IRB rescue techniques to drivers and crew
- Review application of other powered craft in lifeguard/water rescue operations
- Promote the use of IRBs to support lifesaving sport competitions

Media Partnerships 2021

We are very grateful to the provincial and national media in helping us to target at-risk groups. Fifteen press releases issued, 65 media interviews were conducted.

PRESS RELEASES

- Ice Safety Warning For Parents To Risk Of Drowning
- Easter Press Release 2021
- May Bank Holiday 2021
- Water Safety Ireland welcomes UN Resolution on Drowning Prevention
- June Bank Holiday 2021
- Ministers Humphreys and O’Gorman launch “Hold Hands”
- National Water Safety Awareness Week 2021
- 76 People Drowned In Ireland Last Year
- Hot Weather Increases Drowning Risk - UN World Drowning Prevention Day is Sunday 25 July
- Safety officers gear up for Amber Thursday ahead of bank holiday weekend
- August Bank Holiday 2021
- New Ocean Technology Could Help Prevent Drowning
- National Lifesaving Championships 2021
- National Awards Ceremony 2021
- New Chair Appointed to Water Safety Ireland
- Christmas and New Year 2021

PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

- National Services Day Parade, Sept 4
- WSI National Annual Awards Ceremony, Nov 30 (online)

National Water Safety Awareness Week (June 14th – June 20th)

The National Water Safety Awareness Week 2021 campaign encouraged the public to give water safety the focus it deserves, similar to the attention afforded to the Covid-19 pandemic. Ireland experienced an easing of public health restrictions in summer 2021 and the campaign tapped into the visual safety messaging which had become synonymous with Covid-19. The public received new drowning prevention advice every day across online, audio and print channels.

NATIONAL WATER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

JUNE 14-20

BEFORE YOU GET OUT ON A BOAT,

GET INTO A LIFEJACKET

GIVE WATER SAFETY THE FOCUS WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by always wearing a lifejacket when boating.

Check local tides, currents and weather forecast before going out.

Get the advice you need at watersafety.ie



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The SEIKO “Just In Time” Award

Over twenty lives were saved from drowning through the brave actions of rescuers who received recognition at Water Safety Ireland’s online National Awards Ceremony on Tuesday 30th of November 2021. For the second consecutive year, the Award Ceremony was an online only event due to Covid-19 restriction and was broadcast on Water Safety Ireland’s website and social media channels. WSI is grateful to Timemark for sponsoring the Seiko watches. Details of each rescue are listed in this report. Long-Service Volunteer Awards were also presented to 23 volunteers, recognising a combined total of 500 years of service teaching swimming, water rescue and survival skills in communities nationwide.

Certification

There are two broad categories of certification – Swimming and Lifesaving. Certification reflects the efforts of our voluntary members who change skills, attitudes and behaviours by instilling water confidence and deep-water swimming and survival ability.

Water Safety Area Committees processed 10,135 Swimming, Lifesaving and Water Safety certificates in 2021. In addition, a further 21,671 Primary School Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) certificates were processed, 10,325 of the Seal, Marlin and Orca certificates were issued giving a total certification by Water Safety Ireland of 42,131.

Aquatics Organiser	0	Pool Lifeguard Course Tutor	0
Assistant Swimming Teacher	310	Rescue 1	424
Beach Lifeguard	253	Rescue 2	321
Beach Lifeguard Revalidation	394	Rescue 3	208
BLS 1	931	Rescue 4	21
BLS 2	417	Safety 1	587
BLS 3	131	Safety 2	1067
Challenge 1	34	Safety 3	766
Challenge 2	87	Safety 4	832
Disabilities Aquatics Level 1	0	Surf 1	11
Disabilities Aquatics Level 2	0	Surf 2	18
Disabilities Aquatics Level 3	0	Surf 3	42
Disabilities Swimming Teacher Tutor	0	Surf Award Instructor	0
Endurance 1	66	Surf Instructor Beach Safety	87
Endurance 2	164	Surf Instructor Beach Safety Rev	176
Instructor	21	Survival 1	137
Inland Open Water Lifeguard	31	Survival 2	283
Inland Open Water Lifeguard Revalidation	11	Swim Teacher Lifesaving	0
WSI Code of Ethics	0	Swimming Teacher	86
Lifesaving Sport Coach Level 1	0	Swimming Teacher Tutor	2
In-house Pool Lifeguard Tutor	0	Water Safety Awareness	144
National Pool Lifeguard Level 1	176	Water Safety Awareness General & Pool	38
National Pool Lifeguard Level 1 Revalidation	237	Water Safety Awareness Tutor	0

NATIONAL WATER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

JUNE 14-20

NO PUBS IS NO EXCUSE.

DON'T BRING IT TO THE BEACH.

GIVE WATER SAFETY THE FOCUS WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by never mixing alcohol with water activities.

Get the advice you need at watersafety.ie



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National Pool Lifeguard Level 2	631		
National Pool Lifeguard Level 2 Revalidation	978	Total	10,135

Primary Aquatics Water Safety (PAWS) is Water Safety Ireland's program of certification for primary school children and a component of the physical education strand of the primary school curriculum, A total of 21,671 PAWS Certificates were issued in 2021.

Summer Water Safety Weeks

WSI Water Safety Area Committees nationwide run an extensive series of swimming and water safety weeks throughout the summer in pools, rivers, lakes and beachfronts. Many of these classes extend beyond the summer in places that have pools and leisure centres.

Swim weeks consist of instruction in swimming and water safety weeks develop skills in rescue, water survival and basic life support.

Classes made a return in 2021 after a break of one year and adhered to a new Covid-19 standard operating procedure to ensure the safety of volunteers and participants.

Hold Hands

A new 'Hold Hands' pre-primary school water safety education programme was developed in partnership with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It was launched in 2021 to over 4,000 Early Learning and Care Centres nationwide by Ministers Heather Humphreys and Roderic O'Gorman. The programme was established alongside WSI's early learning water safety advocate, Amanda Cambridge whose three-year-old son, Avery Greene, tragically drowned in a swimming pool accident in 2019.

The programme contains six storyboards which highlight potential water safety dangers at home, on farms, at the beach, at rivers, lakes and on holidays. These resources aim to grab children's imagination and reinforce the core message that young children should always hold an adult's hand near water. Included with the storyboards was a hand shaped pointing device which a child can hold, to instil behavioural changes taught in the programme.

World Drowning Prevention Resolution

The United Nations General Assembly approved the first ever resolution on Drowning Prevention in 2021. The resolution was an initiative of both Ireland and Bangladesh who along with co-sponsoring member states can be proud of this historic UN effort to save lives. This was an important and memorable day for the drowning prevention community worldwide.

A key element of the resolution is a UN designated world drowning prevention day, to be observed annually on the 25th July. Activities took place around the world to mark the day, using #DrowningPrevention.

As part of the initiative, Water Safety Ireland asked people to 'Go Blue for World Drowning Prevention Day' by illuminating their organisations' building in the colour blue, lighting up a window in their home, by wearing blue face paint or clothing. A dedicated section on

watersafety.ie showcased the efforts of WSI members and the public online.

WSI Representation at National Level

- Forum of Chairpersons of State Sponsored Bodies – Martin O’Sullivan
- An Taisce Blue Flag Jury – Ronnie Horan
- ACESA (Assoc Chief Executives of State Agencies) – John Leech
- Irish Marine Search and Rescue Committee – John Leech
- Commissioner’s Irish Lights (Users Group) – John Leech
- Marine Safety Communications Working Group – Roger Sweeney
- Local Authority Members Association (LAMA) Jury – Roger Sweeney
- Community Rescue Boats Ireland – Ronnie Horan & Ger Keeling
- PHECC (Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council) – Paul Murphy
- ILAM White Flag Jury – John Farrell
- Green Coast Award – Gerard Keeling
- Federation of Irish Sports – Clare McGrath
- Charles Thomson Award Jury – Breda Collins and John Leech
- WSI Internal Auditor – Alison Elstone and Paul Burke
- National Designated Liaison Person – Ashling Nesbitt

WSI Representation at International Level

- International Life Saving (ILS) board member – Martin O’Sullivan
- ILSE (Europe) Sports Commission – Seamus O’Neill
- ILSE (Europe) Management & Administration Commission – John Leech
- ILSE (Europe) Rescue Commission – Breda Collins
- International Federation of Swimming Teachers Association – John Farrell
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) – Tom Doyle
- College of Referees Panel ILS Europe – Clare McGrath
- International Maritime Rescue Federation – John Leech

Conferences

- Refresher Version 9 For Current Risk Assessors

21st – 22nd April, Online

- Water Safety Area Committee Seminar

2nd May, Online

- National Awards Ceremony

30th November, Online

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YOU'VE STAYED SAFE ALL YEAR.

DON'T STOP NOW.

GIVE WATER SAFETY THE FOCUS WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by putting water safety first for you and your family this summer.
Swim at lifeguarded waterways. Swim between the flags and stay within your depth.

Get the advice you need at watersafety.ie



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Risk Assessments

Water Safety Ireland volunteers carried out 50 Risk Assessments on bathing areas and waterways nationwide that may pose a particular risk to the public. In order to make these waterways safer, recommendations typically include the erection of public rescue equipment, signage and other necessary facilities. We also complete public rescue equipment usage checks and advise Local Authorities, state agencies and private enterprises on matters relating to water safety.

Sligo	Strandhill	Clare	The Old Pier, Doolan
Kerry	Maherbeg BF	Meath	Mornington Beach
Kerry	Ventry BF	Donegal	Magheroarty
Kerry	Inch BF	Donegal	Port Arthur
Kerry	Kells BF	Galway	Moyrus Beach, Carna
Limerick	UL Pool	Galway	Silverstrand
Cork	Garryvoe	Galway	Bunowen, Ballyconnelly (Pier and Beach)
Cork	Shanagary / Ardnahinch	Galway	Grattan
Cork	Bluepool, Glengarriff	Galway	The Promenade, Salthill
Cork	Coolmaine Beach, Timoleague	Carlow	Suirway
Cork	The Warren, Rosscarbery	Sligo	Trawalua Strand
Cork	Barleycove BF	Sligo	Deadmans Point, Rosses Point
Cork	Sherkin Island	Sligo	Rosses Point
Cork	Garretstown BF	Sligo	Enniscrone
Cork	Ballynamona Beach	Sligo	Culleenamore Strand, Strandhill
Cork	Long Strand Rosscarbery	Sligo	Yellow Strand, Magherow
Cork	Greenlands / Ring	Sligo	Dorrin's Strand, Strandhill
Cork	Inch BF	Westmeath	The Cut, Lough Lene
Cork	Bandon Flood Relief Scheme	Westmeath	Portnashangan, Lough Owel
Cork	Redbarn BF	Westmeath	Lilliput, Lough Ennell
Clare	Spanish Point BF	Westmeath	Lough Lene Swim Buoys
Clare	Cappa (Kilrush) BF	Mayo	Dugort (Golden Strand) Achill BF
Clare	Ballycuggeran (Killaloe)	Mayo	Dooega Achill BF
Clare	Whitestrands Doonbeg	Mayo	Clare Island BF
Clare	Mountshannon BF	Mayo	Elly Bay Belmullet BF

Lifeguard Rescues and Preventive Actions

Our Local Authorities employ Water Safety Ireland assessed lifeguards during the bathing season at popular bathing sites nationwide. The table below gives a clear picture of the effectiveness and value they contribute to saving lives each year and we commend them for this work in drowning prevention.

	Rescues without craft	Rescue Craft Rescues	First Aid	Lost Child Found	Advice Given	Accidents Prevented	Other incidents
Carlow	10	1	21	0	2,742	229	0
Cork	7	14	944	24	17,793	5,746	15
Clare	5	49	1,898	56	10,735	4,516	49
Donegal	1	6	328	22	28,921	5,391	792
Dublin	26	5	207	8	1,700	358	79
Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown	46	20	227	1	205	103	0
Fingal	32	28	296	72	3,475	479	127
Galway	20	44	569	30	16,564	1,152	350
Kerry	26	37	1,175	174	9,584	3,127	1318
Kilkenny	2	0	122	0	875	139	0
Limerick Co.	26	8	96	0	329	274	0
Louth	0	0	139	18	805	22	2
Mayo	3	19	307	9	12,196	187	16
Meath	0	0	4	0	1	0	2
Roscommon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sligo	1	0	28	2	17,255	8,913	3,852
Tipperary	4	0	1	0	9,134	0	0
Waterford	19	14	425	100	11,103	5,385	648
Wexford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wicklow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	228	245	6,787	516	143,417	36,021	13,137
Total Rescues		473					

Lifesaving Sport

The Covid-19 pandemic made it challenging to facilitate sporting activities and large-scale events but one competition was held, with the National Surf Lifesaving Championships taking place in Kilkee, Co. Clare in October. Water Safety Ireland would like to thank all officials, event organizers and helpers that made everything run so smoothly. Due to Covid-19 restrictions no team champions were crowned for 2021. All other sporting events for 2021 were cancelled.

NATIONAL WATER SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

JUNE 14-20

DON'T LET A YEAR OF DISTANCING

STOP YOU BEING SAFE

GIVE WATER SAFETY **THE FOCUS** WE ALL GIVE COVID

Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by putting water safety first for you and your family this summer. Swim at lifeguarded waterways. Swim between the flags and stay within your depth.

Get the advice you need at **watersafety.ie**



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An initiative within the Department of Rural and Community Development.



National Awards Ceremony

Online due to Covid-19 related restrictions. Available to view at www.watersafety.ie.

Twenty-four lives were saved from drowning by rescuers who received recognition at Water Safety Ireland's National Annual Awards Ceremony, broadcasted online at 7pm on Tuesday 30th November 2021.

The Minister for Rural and Community Development Heather Humphreys TD acknowledged recipients of a range of Awards including the SEIKO Just in Time Awards, Long Service Awards, and Recognition Awards for services rendered to Water Safety Ireland and also the Volunteer of the Year Award. Among the recipients are members of the public, members of Water Safety Ireland and other individuals and organisations who assist in the reduction of drownings by supporting the work of Water Safety Ireland throughout the year.

Long-Service Volunteer Awards were presented to 23 volunteers, recognising a combined total of 500 years of service teaching swimming, water rescue and survival skills in communities nationwide.

Community and Social Responsibility Awards

In recognition of the support given to Water Safety Ireland's community work, charitable activities and commitment to drowning prevention initiatives and the reduction of aquatic related injuries.

Timemark

Timemark Limited is a distributor of leading Watch and Jewellery brands. Founded in 1979, and entirely Irish owned and managed, Timemark sponsors the SEIKO Just In Time Award, which they have supported since its inception in 2001 and for which we are deeply grateful.

Amanda Cambridge & Leianne Maverley

Amanda Cambridge, whose three-year-old son, Avery Greene, drowned in a pool while on a family holiday in Alicante in Spain in 2019, worked as an Ambassador to promote Water Safety Ireland's 'Hold Hands' programme for pre-schools, creches and early learning centres. Amanda's friend Leianne has also played a formative part in reaching out through social media channels to help encourage parents and Early Learning Centres to embrace the programme. Their efforts will help to save lives and change the behaviour of children and parents when visiting waterways and for this we are truly grateful. They are very deserving recipients of our appreciation.

Coláiste Pobail Setanta, Clonee, Dublin 15 – Cara Doyle, Teacher

Cara's Transition Year class participated in the Young Social Innovators of Ireland for which they created an awareness campaign about the importance of being water safety aware. They organised a number of fundraisers and raised €1263.00 for Water Safety Ireland drowning prevention initiatives. We are delighted to recognise their efforts to help others

stay safe around water.

Danger Of Using Inflatable Toys, a video campaign by Cork Co Co and partners – Caroline Casey, Cork Co Co

Cork County Council in conjunction with Water Safety Ireland, the RNLI, the Irish Coast Guard, and several other Local Authorities produced two short films on the dangers of using inflatable toys in open water. One of the educational videos is aimed at primary school children and the other targets adult audiences. The key messaging uses real life scenarios to show that inflatable toys are a drowning risk and should ever be used in open water. Thank you to all for showing how successful partnerships can help reduce drownings.

Smart Dublin, a collaboration of Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council and South Dublin County Council – Jamie Cudden

This Award goes to Smart Dublin for coordinating three companies to pilot a low-cost alert system that reports when ring buoys are used for a rescue, go missing or are tampered with. This will help Local Authorities ensure that their public rescue equipment is in place and ready for use when needed to help save a life. An Award also goes to the three companies that spent a year designed the technology and now enter phase two that will see ten local authorities install this lifesaving solution. Congratulations to the three companies which are:

Civic Integrated Solutions

MSEMICON Teo

ZiggyTec Ltd

Gráinne & Dee Gavigan, sisters and cold-water swimming enthusiasts

Gráinne and her sister Dee are year-round open water swimmers. Over the last couple of years they have seen many people that are not used to cold water, get into difficulty when they overestimate their ability and underestimate the risks. They came up with a simple message aimed especially at newcomers, called “Hot Tips 4 Cold Water”. Their four basic tips – LOOK UP, GEAR UP, BUDDY UP and WARM UP - have already started to circulate nationwide and we are grateful for their efforts to help educate a growing number of newcomers enjoying open water swimming.

University of Limerick Sport Arena, – Alan Ward and team

The UL Sport Arena has for many years been committed to promoting water safety for many years. It’s 50-metre pool is the ideal home for Water Safety Ireland’s Annual National Stillwater Lifesaving Championships. Each year, staff go above and beyond to help host the event to the highest standards and they have previously played a key role in hosting the European Junior Lifesaving Championships for which they also provided accommodation for many of the national teams. UL Sport also works with Water Safety Ireland to train lifeguards on a weekly basis. We are also deeply grateful to UL Sport Arena for facilitating a range of projects over the years, including the 2021 update of Water Safety Ireland’s “Pool Safety Guidelines”.

Amber Thursday – Declan Keogh at Kildare Co Co

“Amber Thursday” is a collaborative initiative started by Declan to raise awareness of fire, road, and water safety ahead of the August Bank Holiday, which is one of the busiest weekends at beaches, lakes, and rivers. Fire, road, and water safety officers across Ireland worked together to promote the initiative and we are grateful to Declan and to all those

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Mark National Water Safety Awareness Week by never using inflatable toys on open water.
Beware of rip currents. Always supervise children and swim at lifeguarded waterways.

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Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

An initiative within the Department of Rural and Community Development.



who shared the water safety messaging nationwide.

National Services Day – Seamus O'Neill

Seamus O'Neill has been an enthusiastic lead in the voluntary effort to recognise Ireland's emergency and frontline emergency services. He has played a key role in leading the Frontline Emergency and Security Services Eire Forum. He played a key role in establishing National Services Day on the first Saturday in September which includes parades, wreath-laying events, an art exhibition at Dublin Castle that included Lifeguards on duty and commemoration ceremonies that recognise emergency services. His efforts this year resulted in national tributes being paid to members of frontline services who died and who are currently sick because of Covid-19. Thank you Seamus for your selfless dedication to supporting our Emergency Services.

Swimming A Long Way Together - Vanessa Dawes, Long Distance Swimmer

Vanessa is a visual artist and long distance swimmer who has organised water related art projects around the world, in this case a Cork Endurance Swim that had swimmers in the pool for thirty hours. Proceeds of the event went to Water Safety Ireland's local initiatives in Cork and local clubs and swim groups supported a project that inspires and celebrates swimming and swimming communities. Thank you Vanessa for using your love of swimming to help others connect with our aquatic environments.

Wix and Wax – Danielle Kenneally and Chantell Keane

Danielle's brother Jack was just 15 when he and his friend Shay Moloney lost their lives after getting into difficulty swimming in a disused quarry. She and Chantell decided to raise funds for a water safety awareness initiative. They co-founded a home fragrance business "Wix and Wax" and donated a month's profit from the sale of a specially created 'Daisy snap-bar' to WSI. The daisy has a strong significance to the Kenneally family as Jack kept a daisy on the back of his phone, and that's something that Danielle holds dear. A water safety tips leaflet was included with every fragrance bar sold. Thank you Danielle and Chantell for helping to raise awareness and protect others from drowning.

Galway Bay User's Group – Kevin Gately & Michael Swan

Kevin and Michael were instrumental in setting up "The Galway Bay Users Group", established as a partnership, linking statutory, commercial, educational, sporting and voluntary agencies involved in marine activity in the greater Galway Bay Area. The voluntary group facilitates the sharing of expertise, technological and scientific advancements, research and local knowledge in a collaborative manner to promote and advance efforts, particularly in marine safety and Search and Rescue/recovery operations for the benefit of the wider communities that use Galway Bay. Thanks to Kevin and Michael for helping to bring everyone together to improve safety for all.

Leon Quinlan Perpetual Award

Clonmoney National School – Clíodhna Mc Cannon

The Leon Quinlan Perpetual Award is presented to a primary school that has been particularly attentive to the need for pupils to learn water safety skills. When young Leon Quinlan drowned in 2004, his mother Lynn contacted Water Safety Ireland about running an event to raise awareness about water safety. Funding from that event enabled WSI to recruit an Education Development Officer to visit primary schools and teach water safety awareness to pupils. Lynn's support has enabled thousands of children to learn how to stay safe near water. This year's recipient is Clonmoney National School in Co Clare to whom we are most grateful for delivering Water Safety Ireland's Primary Aquatics Water Safety Programme to their pupils. Coordinated by their teacher Ms Mc Cannon, the children learned about local hazards in the home, on the farm and other aquatic environments nearby. We are very grateful to Clonmoney National School and congratulate them for ensuring that the children in their care have the knowledge and skills necessary to stay safe from drowning.

Avery Greene Memorial Award

Rosnaree Kids Club.

Avery Greene was just three-years-old when, in 2019, he tragically drowned while on holiday in Spain . Avery's mother Amanda became an enthusiastic promoter of an education resource called Hold Hands that was developed by Water Safety Ireland and distributed to more than 4,000 Early Learning Centres nationwide. It contains lots of games and fun activities designed to encourage this young age group to talk about water safety and it has been embraced by Educators around the country, including today's recipient of the very first Award - "Rosnaree Kids Club", a preschool and after school service for young children. The club has encouraged the children to learn lots about water safety. For all children, it has been a disruptive time with swimming pools closed and without swimming lessons but thanks to places like Rosnaree Kids Club, very young children will have a sense of how to stay safe from drowning and for this we are very grateful.



Sports Persons of the Year Award

This year, Water Safety Ireland is recognising those volunteers who have made significant contributions to lifesaving sport in Ireland. It takes an army of enthusiastic volunteers to coach, chaperone, organise, and host competitions and training nationwide. Thanks to their selfless dedication, Lifesaving Sport participation levels is at an all-time high and their dedication is also reflected in the number of title-winning performances at national and international competitions.

This year, we recognise the efforts of two people who to this day remain pillars of lifesaving sport volunteerism. Together, they were founding members of what is now called the Sports Commission which has developed the traditional lifesaving competitions in line with international best practice. These two individuals have been the back bone of many Irish teams that have now gone on to become an established force to be reckoned with at international lifesaving competitions.

Brendan McGrath, Co Clare

Brendan Mc Grath is a lifelong member of Water Safety Ireland, having started lifesaving as a trainee instructor over 50 years ago, teaching lifesaving and swimming in summer and winter. He is currently the head coach of the National Lifesaving team and has coached lifesaving sport to all national and international levels.

Since starting as National Coach in 2004, Brendan has coached Irish competitors to secure many medals at European and World level. Brendan has played a key role in the development of the National Squad structures that have enabled Irish teams to achieve these accolades.

In addition to coaching, Brendan has written Water Safety Ireland's Lifesaving Sport Coaching Manuals, a framework that will facilitate the training and development of coaches all over Ireland.

Brendan also played a key role in the building of the Whitestrand Lifesaving Training Centre, which opened in 2015. He has also taken the lead in an ongoing project to build a similar training and rescue centre in Lahinch which is nearing completion. Brendan is very involved at a community level, dedicated to ensuring that local kids get the opportunity to train and use these facilities.

Brendan has consistently dedicated his time and energy to the ethos of Water Safety Ireland, sharing a lifetime of expertise and learning, for which athletes are extremely fortunate and grateful. A deserving recipient of Sports Person of The Year 2021.

Seamus O'Neill, Co Donegal

Seamus O'Neill is the current Vice-Chairman of Water Safety Ireland, a Council member and volunteer with his local Water Safety Area Committee in Donegal.

In addition to his extensive contributions at an organisational level, Seamus is committed to the development of Lifesaving sport in Ireland. He played a major role in the establishment of the original Sports Commission and is a previous chair of the that Commission. His commitment to developing the sport is not limited to local or national level, having been involved in Irish

contingents traveling the world to learn about the sport and bring back what they learnt to pass on to competitors and volunteers. He was part of the first Irish group to become international referees and has served as a member on the European Sports Commission, thus ensuring Ireland's involvement in the development of the sport internationally.

No matter how bad the weather, Seamus can be found on a beach in a red referee jacket, running the beach flag arena or on the water's edge refereeing the different events. He is a familiar face on the beach at all Irish lifesaving competitions and the events would not have been so successful over the years had Seamus not organised the courses on which the competitions ran. He also organises a rescue boat to travel to events nationwide. Seamus has been a driving force in Donegal Water Safety Area Committee upon which he has served in many different roles. Today he still plays a very active role in training and coaching Donegal lifesaving teams as well as being involved in the development of the new Donegal training centre in Creevy.

Seamus is also the "man in the van", stretching back to when he brought some of the first Irish teams to international competitions in the 1990's and organised for some of the first competition rescue boards and skis to come back to Ireland. He also ensures that the national team equipment gets to European Competitions safely. Seamus recognised that having this personal equipment at competitions makes the world of difference for athletes when it comes to competing with the best in the world. Without this gear Irish teams would not be as competitive on the international stage. Seamus is a vital member of the traveling contingent, always offering to help transport people and equipment. On behalf of Water Safety Ireland and all of the competitors, we are proud of the commitment to lifesaving sport shown by Seamus, a deserving recipient of Sports Person of the Year.



Long Service Awards

Long Service Awards are presented in recognition of a voluntary commitment to promoting a public awareness of water safety and rescue based on the humanitarian goal of saving life. Water Safety Ireland extends a sincere debt of gratitude to the following volunteers.

First Name	Last Name	County	Years of Service
Caitriona	McMahon	Clare	10
Alison	Deane	Clare	10
Josh	Kelly	Ballybunion CRBI	10
John	McShane	Sligo	10
Eddie	Walshe	Clare	15
Tara	Spry Hayes	Clare	15
PJ	O’Gorman	Ballybunion CBRI	15
Fiona	Staunton	Clare	15
Jean	Mahon	Kildare	20
Sinead	Miller	Dublin	20
Paddy	Drumgoole	Louth	20
Josephine	O’Rourke	Monaghan	20
John	McGee	Donegal	20
Evelyn	O’Reilly	Cavan	20
Philomena	Lynch	Cavan	20
Leo	Mahon	Kildare	30
Elizabeth	Tivnan	Kildare	30
Deirdre	Webster	Kildare	30
Clare	McGrath	Clare	30
John	Staunton	Clare	30
Ann Marie	McGee Campbell	Donegal	30
John	Morrell	Donegal	40
Frances	O’Regan	Louth	40

Volunteer of the Year Award

Andrew Lally – Volunteer of the Year

Since he was a child, Andrew Lally has had a love for all things aquatic, honing his skills by taking Water Safety Ireland classes in his early teens at Leisureland swimming pool in Galway. He developed a love of lifesaving and throughout his university studies, lifeguarded in Galway city and county. Andrew developed these skills further to become a very active WSI Instructor, assisting with summer water safety weeks, and training hundreds of lifeguards and lifesavers.

His busy work life as a dentist has never curtailed his enthusiastic involvement with the Galway WSI Committee which he currently chairs. Andrew also continues to train both pool and beach lifeguards and his dedication is further reflected in the fact that he continues to teach water safety every Sunday morning at his local pool.

In addition to his involvement in training lifeguards and teaching water safety, Andrew also gives up a huge amount of time to lifesaving sport. He is an active international referee and has travelled all over the world, voluntarily giving up personal holidays to support and manage national teams and at the same time carry out his duties as a referee. Andrew is a familiar face to all national competitors from nippers to masters and is a stalworth at pool and beach competitions. As a referee and manager to national teams, Andrew has travelled in a voluntarily capacity to many international events, utilising his personal holiday time to do so, and solving a range of challenging scenarios to ensure everything is run smoothly and safely.

Water Safety Ireland is proud to have dedicated people like Andrew Lally all over Ireland to train lifeguards, teach water safety, referee competitions, and support athletes. Andrew represents the highest levels of this volunteerism, and we are extremely lucky to have him on our team.

Thank you Andrew, you are a very deserving recipient of Water Safety Ireland's 2021 Volunteer of the Year.

The SEIKO “Just In Time” Award

Presented to those who came to the assistance of person(s) in difficulty in water and in danger of drowning. Without their quick thinking, the outcomes could have been very different.

Ruairi Brennan – Laois: In July this year, while swimming at the River Nore in County Laois, Ruairi noticed a woman who was unable to swim enter the water. He tried to assist her and quickly realised that he needed to take her in tow. Ruairi calmed the woman down and managed to take her in a carry to the bank. Well done Ruairi.

Tina Kavanagh – Kilkenny: In the summer of 1985, Tina was a teenager swimming at Graignamanagh, County Kilkenny when she noticed a young boy in distress in the water. He had gotten into difficulty after receiving an accidental knock to his head. He subsequently swallowed water and began to panic. Tina swam to the boy and tilted his head back, all the while reassuring him and eventually took him to safety. Well done Tina for your quick thinking.

Gary Heelan – Cork: On the 6th of November last year, Gary was out for a walk on the banks of

Blackwater, Mallow, Co Cork. He noticed a young woman in the river on the opposite side of the bank, who was holding on to a tree and in difficulty. Gary immediately ran across the bridge, down the opposite bank of the river and contacted the emergency services. He made his way to the casualty and tried to assist her from the bank. Gary entered the water and against a strong flow managed to help her to safety. A very well deserving award indeed. Congratulations Gary.

Patrick Mungovan – Clare: In July this year, a young girl fell into the water at Quilty pier, County Clare. Patrick became alerted to the situation and without hesitation jumped into the water, before bringing her back to safety. Patrick was aware of the area and was able to identify a slipway to bring the young girl back to safety. Congratulations Patrick.

Zoe Lally – Sligo: In March this year, a group of youths were playing at Easkey pier in County Sligo and watching the waves wash over the top of the pier. A large wave suddenly broke over the breakwater and down onto the boys, washing them off the pier and into the sea. Zoe, an experienced surfer, ran onto the pier and managed to pull two of the teenagers to safety with the aid of ringbuoys. She then swam out to the third boy and managed to bring him to safety further along the coast. A wonderful rescue, well done Zoe.

Daragh Flynn – Wicklow: In July this year, Daragh was walking across a bridge at Clara Funpark, County Wicklow when he noticed a small child in the water. He immediately jumped into the water and picked her up into his arms. After saving her from the water he helped to warm her up and was assisted by an off-duty paramedic. They took her to a first aid room where they kept her warm until emergency services arrived. Another wonderful rescue, Well done Daragh.

Ger Daly – Galway: In September 2019, Ger was swimming with a group at Salthill, County Galway when one of the group got into difficulty. He soon realised the man was unwell, at which point Ger turned him onto his back and towed him safely to shore where he regained consciousness. Ger waited with him until emergency services arrived and the man made a full recovery. A very well done Ger.

Philip Owens – Louth: In July this year, Philip noticed the coastguard passing by enroute to a person in difficulty in the water at Whitestown, County Louth. He immediately located a kayak and paddled out to the person in difficulty. Philip gripped onto the man's lifejacket and stayed in position until a rescue boat arrived at the scene. He then assisted the man onto the rescue boat. Well done Philip.

Michael Carrig (Just In Time Award) and Marguerite Carrig (Rescue Appreciation Award) – Clare: In July of 2005, Michael and Marguerite were boating when they observed changing weather conditions as another boating family were turning for home on the Shannon Estuary in County Clare. They followed the small boat as they realised it was in jeopardy of being overturned. They took the woman and children on board their larger boat and safely escorted the man on the small boat to his destination. Michael receives a Seiko Just In Time award and Marguerite receives a Rescue Appreciation award. Well done to you both.

Nikki Wan – Dublin: In October this year, Nikki was walking her dogs along the Grand Canal, at Harold's Cross bridge when she noticed a pair of men's trainers submerged under the water. She grabbed the man's hood and managed to bring him to safety to the riverbank. She then checked his pulse, placed him into the recovery position and remained with him until emergency services arrived. Nikkola would like to thank Justin from Dolphin's Barn Fire Station for nominating her and everyone at Water Safety Ireland for her award. Nikkola would also like to dedicate this award to her mum, and her stepdad Tony who is currently in hospital.

Tommy Moyna – Monaghan: On July 25th this year, Tommy was working on a farm when he heard shouting from a man and woman in difficulty in an adjoining lake. He immediately dived under the water and pulled the submerged woman above water. The man also held onto Tommy who successfully managed to tow the couple to safety. A sincere thank you Tommy.



Mark Kavanagh – Wexford: In July this year, Mark became aware of a woman in distress in the water at a bridge in Wexford town. The RNLI were on their way to the scene when they witnessed Mark lifting the woman out of the water and into his boat. He brought her to the Wexford quay front where emergency services were waiting. Well done Mark for your quick lifesaving action.

Joseph McNulty, Kristin McNulty and Sean McNulty – Donegal: In September this year, McNulty family were walking on Bundoran Beach, County Donegal when they noticed three girls trapped on a sandbank by surrounding water. Two of the girls were trying to swim to safety and the third girl was now stranded up to chest level in the water. Kristin grabbed a ringbuoy, while both Joseph and Sean entered the water up to their waist. The ringbuoy was used to pull two of the girls to safety. As Joseph & Kristin edged closer to the third girl, Sean also entered the water with the ringbuoy. He managed to reach her and pull her to safety in a cross-chest hold. Well done Joseph, Kristin and Sean on a remarkable rescue.

The Rescue Appreciation Awards, for coming to assistance in a rescue.

Declan Reid from County Kildare, posthumously

In February 2021 Declan was on the bank of the River Barrow, with a rope tied to his son's kayak. Suddenly the kayak overturned, at which point Declan jumped in to rescue his son Arron. Declan managed to hold Arron up in the water until other family members and members of the public were able to bring Arron to shore. Tragically, Declan went below the water and was lost to the river. A truly selfless act.

Stephen Clarke from County Dublin, posthumously.

In November 2012, Stephen was working at a hotel along the River Liffey when he heard cries for help coming from the boardwalk. A woman was in difficulty and Stephen immediately entered the water. He managed to reach the woman and brought her to the other side of the river, where another young man arrived to aid the rescue. They eventually made it to a ladder, and all were successfully pulled out of the water to safety. A situation that could have had a tragic outcome if not for Stephen's efforts. Sadly, Stephen has since passed away due to an unrelated illness, but we are thankful and recognise his efforts to save a life.

Media Appreciation Awards

Presented in appreciation for covering drowning prevention and water safety issues throughout the year.

Local Radio Station Award: Midlands 103FM (Offaly)

Midlands 103FM is a local independent radio station broadcasting from Tullamore, Co Offaly to counties Laois, Offaly and Westmeath. Thanks to their coverage of water safety issues, listeners are more aware of the dangers at aquatic environments, and for this we are very grateful.

National Radio Broadcaster: RTÉ Documentary On One – Sarah Blake and Lorna Siggins, Producers.

Radio Telefís Éireann began broadcasting in 1926, making it one of the oldest continuously operating public service broadcaster in the world. Their Doc on One series brings you multi award-winning documentaries that tell real life stories. In this case, Sarah Blake and Lorna Siggins, producers created the Documentary on One production "Miracle in Galway Bay", one year on from the miraculous rescue of two young women stranded on paddle boards in Galway Bay. We are grateful to RTÉ for liaising with Water Safety Ireland on this and other water safety issues to deliver important messages to the public and for helping us to raise awareness and

to change attitudes and behaviours at our aquatic environments.

National TV Broadcaster: RTÉ News – Sharon Tobin, Reporter

Throughout the summer, thousands of people were attracted to Ireland's beaches and inland waterways nationwide. The waterways provided some relief from the Covid-19 pandemic and the public were able to enjoy these waterways thanks to the presence of trained Lifeguards. The importance of swimming at Lifeguarded waterways was raised on a number of occasions by RTÉ Reporter Sharon Tobin, who took the opportunity to raise get some great footage of all those who train and work so hard to keep people safe while enjoying the water. We are grateful to Sharon Tobin and the RTÉ News team for helping us to promoting this lifesaving resource.

Provincial Press Award: The Clare Champion - Colin McGann, Editor

The Clare Champion is a weekly newspaper that was first published in 1903. A strong voice for the local community, the newspaper has promoted many of Water Safety Ireland's messages to readers including the lifesaving classes conducted by our volunteers at the Rescue and Training Centre in Lahinch. They also provided particularly supportive coverage about lifesaving following the tragic loss of local Lifeguard and Surf Life Saving team member, Fionn O'Brien, following his accidental death in a surfing incident this past summer. We congratulate the Champion and thank them sincerely for helping to highlight water safety awareness.

National Press Award: The Irish Times – Jennifer O'Connell, Journalist

The Irish Times is a daily broadsheet newspaper and online digital publication that first printed in 1859. Their printed and digital editions have covered many topical water safety issues throughout the year. An example is an article by Jennifer O'Connell in which she described how experienced swimmer Jack Eoin Rua O'Neill quickly got into trouble in swells that he compared to being tumbled around in a washing machine. On the day of publication, seven people had drowned in seven days. We are truly grateful for this support as it helps to encourage readers to talk about water safety with friends and family.

Media Appreciation Award – online broadcasting: Her.ie - Kat O'Connor, Journalist

Her.ie is a lifestyle website that attracts an audience of 1.4 million people each month and has a following of 684,000 across their social channels. It provides a platform for information that engages readers through the lens of real women's lives. Journalist Kat O'Connor illuminated on the tragedy of child drownings, in this case through the eyes of Amanda Cambridge whose loss of her son Avery prompted Amanda to engage with journalists like Kat to water safety education for young children. We are grateful to her.ie for raising awareness with their readers.

Analysis of Drownings 2021

Water Safety Ireland - targeting at-risk groups with drowning prevention initiatives.

The total number of drownings in Ireland in 2021 was 80, four more than in 2020 when 76 drowned. The average number of drownings each year over the past ten years is 110. Each figure in the following graphical analysis, be it accidental, suicide or of undetermined cause, reflects a preventable tragedy that affects so many lives. Water Safety Ireland continues to target at-risk groups with initiatives to highlight best practices so that drownings are reduced.

A synopsis of some general contributory factors over the years:

1. Poor or inadequate equipment (e.g. boats or lifejackets);
2. Not wearing a correctly fitting lifejacket;
3. Alcohol consumption;
4. Falling unexpectedly into water;
5. Improper use of boats and equipment;
6. Overestimation of skills; underestimation of ability;
7. Lack of local knowledge when travelling in Ireland and abroad;
8. Not being able to swim or not having lifesaving and water survival skills;
9. Easy unauthorized access to waterways;
10. Cold water shock and hypothermia;
11. Current (including rip currents, river currents, and tidal currents);
12. Offshore winds (including flotation devices);
13. Pre-existing diseases;
14. Underwater entanglement;
15. Bottom surface gradient and stability;
16. Waves (coastal, boat);
17. Water transparency;
18. Impeded visibility (including coastal configuration, structures and overcrowding);
19. Lack of parental supervision (infants and children);
20. Change in weather conditions;
21. Excessive "horseplay" or over exuberant behaviour;
22. Swimming outside the depth of the user.

A synopsis of some general preventive and management actions:

1. Public education by Water Safety Ireland regarding hazards and safe behaviours;
2. Teaching children to stay away from water when unsupervised through the WSI PAWS (Primary Aquatics Water Safety) programme;
3. Continual adult supervision of children;
4. WSI media campaigns that drowning can happen quickly and quietly;
5. Promote in WSI press announcements, the restriction of alcohol provision before or during aquatic activities;
6. Provision by Water Safety Ireland of properly trained and equipped lifeguards;
7. Provision of rescue services;
8. Water Safety Ireland Risk Assessments that include assessments of local hazard warning notices, access to emergency response and availability of resuscitation skills/facilities and other factors;
9. Development by Water Safety Ireland of rescue and resuscitation skills among general public and user groups;

THANK YOU

LIFEGUARDS FOR MAKING SUMMER SAFER



BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY

THIS SUMMER, LIFEGUARDS GAVE MORE THAN EVER

More than... 470 people rescued, 500 lost children reunited, 6,000 people given first aid, 35,000 accidents prevented and 140,000 pieces of expert advice given.

NOW IT'S UP TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US

Lifeguards finished in September, so protect yourself and your loved ones by putting water safety first. Make it part of the conversation around your dinner table. It means holding children's hands near water, staying away from the water's edge and always wearing a lifejacket on or near water. Together, let's bring the number of drownings in Ireland down for good.

For advice visit watersafety.ie

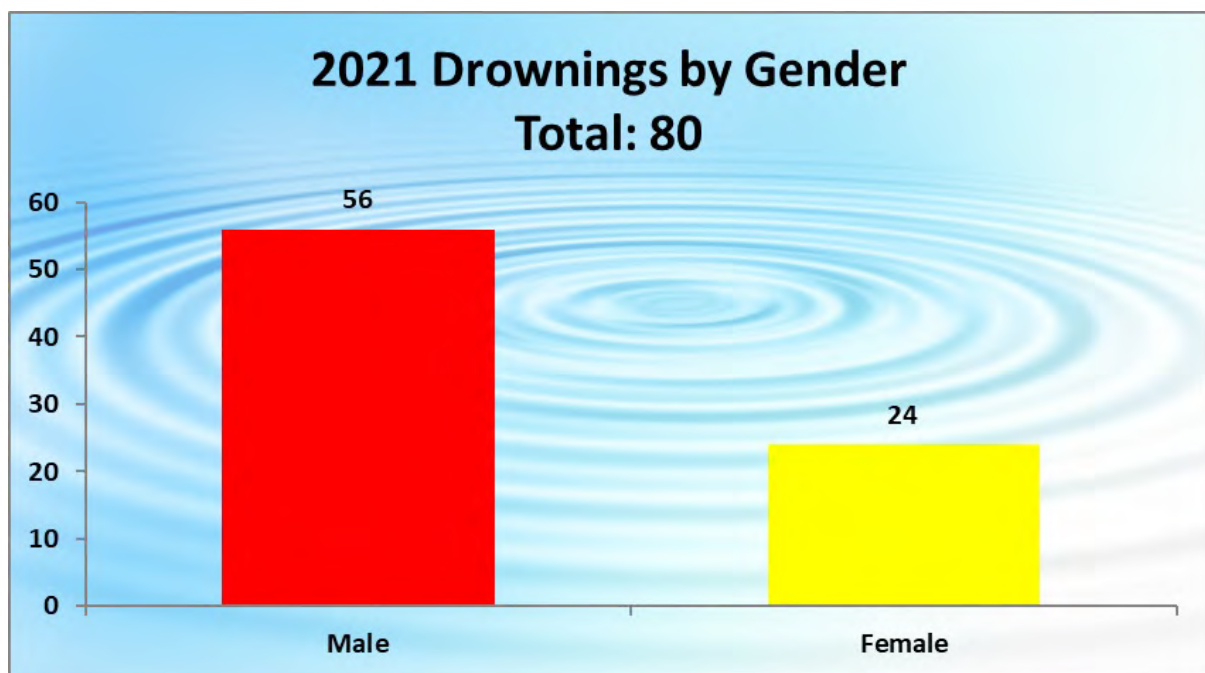
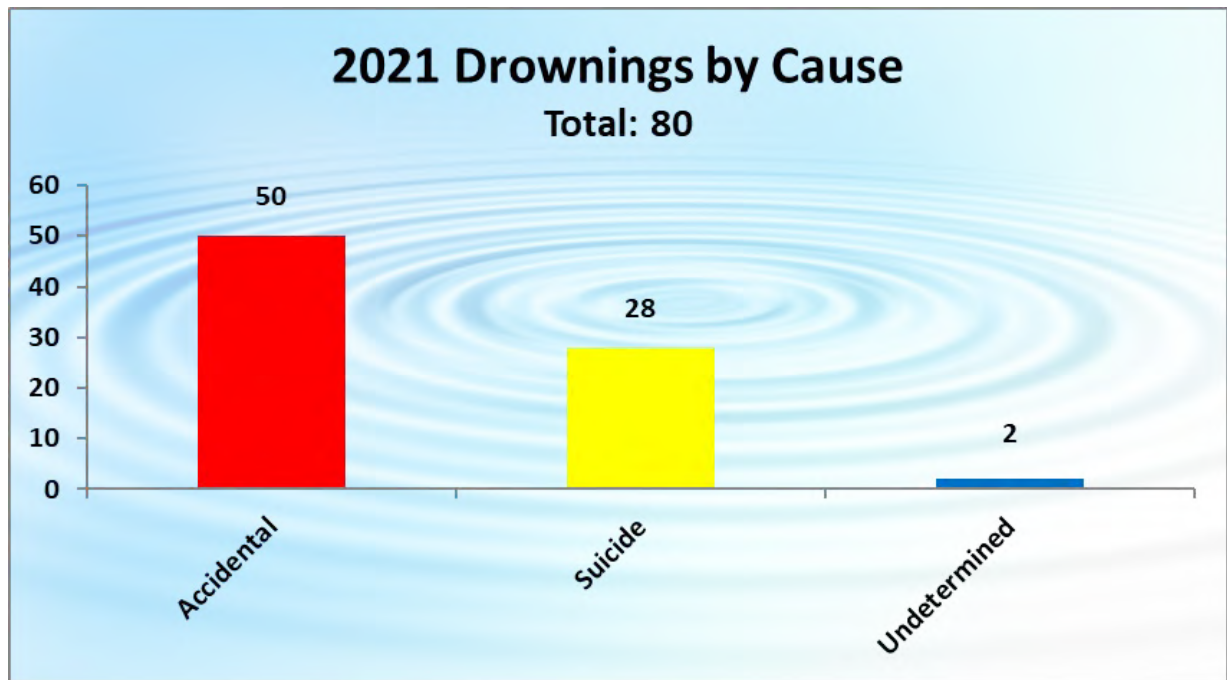


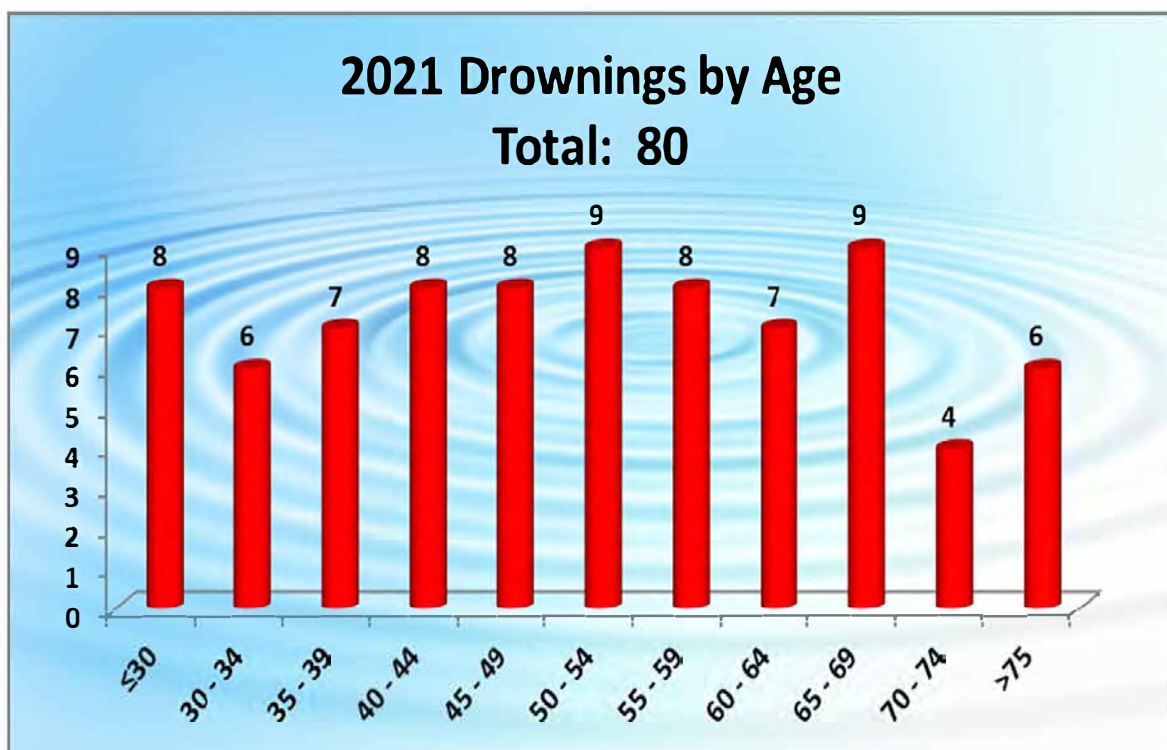
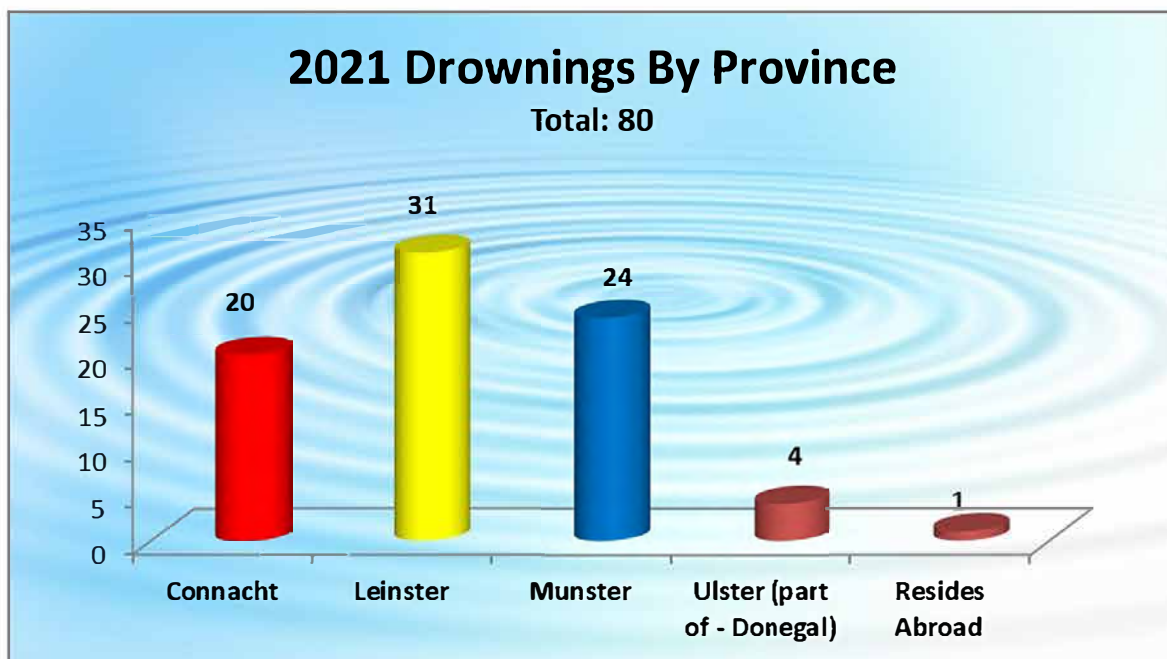
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Government of Ireland



10. Coordination by Water Safety Ireland with user group associations concerning hazard awareness and safe behaviours;
11. Wearing of adequate lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices when boating;
12. Fencing and doors to isolate outdoor aquatic environments.

*Any interpretation of the figures must be exercised with caution because they are provisional, pending supplementary documentation and therefore subject to change pending further correspondence.







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An initiative within the Department of Rural and Community Development.

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